

1st Robe LEDWash 600s on JLS

Posted on December 10, 2010

10 December 2010



Courtesy Louise Stickland The very first batch of the new Robe ROBIN LEDWash 600 LED Wash fixtures off the production line in the Czech Republic were delivered to leading UK lighting rental company HSL, with 40 of them going straight out on JLS's UK arena tour, specified by lighting designer Dave Lee.

JLS are the UK's favourite boyband, their meteoric career kicking off after being runners up on the

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2008 X-Factor talent show. Since then they have sold 1.3 million albums worldwide – including their new and second studio release “Outta This World” – and have enjoyed massive chart success including several Number 1s as well as winning 2010 Brit Awards for “Best Breakthrough Artist” and “Best British Single” for ‘Beat Again’.

The show for this, their second major tour, has been created by artistic director Beth Honan with a set and stage design by Peter Barnes, with all the technical production co-ordinated by Production North, overseen on the road by production manager Karen Ringland.



When Dave Lee was choosing his fixtures, he specifically needed some very bright and lightweight units to do certain jobs. When HSL’s project manager Mike Oates demonstrated the LEDWash 600 to him – he knew this was the ideal fixture. The first challenge he needed to overcome with the LEDWashes was to illuminate a large catwalk approximately 120 ft long that flies in from the roof and hangs above the audience for a whole section of the show, allowing the band to get close up and personal to their hoards of adoring fans.

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Being some way off from the stage, there were very few places available from which to rig lights at the right positions to do this and the optimum one was on a 50 ft truss used to lower and track a car in from the roof and out into the audience at the start of the show - from which the band perform the first number.



This truss is already heavily loaded with the car (the adapted chassis of a real Ford Mustang) and all the flying and rigging equipment, so whatever he used had to be extremely light - enter the LEDWash 600 - 20 of which are rigged in 2 lines to the underside of the tracking truss.

This tracking truss is trimmed at 55 ft, so the lights needed to be powerful enough to reach right to the end of the catwalk and ensure the band are clearly seen whilst performing out there - a challenge that is no problem for the LEDWash 600s.

Lee is really impressed with the zoom. The LEDWash 600s on the tracking truss are zoomed from

wide at one end of the line to a fine beam at the other, so they fan out neatly and evenly down the walkway from above.



The other 20 LEDWash 600s he is using are on ladder trusses, with 10 a side flanking a massive 80ft wide by 30ft high (1140 active tiles) Stealth video screen. They are used for elegantly framing the screen and for sparkly, swirly colour chases and other effects.

He's delighted overall with the LEDWash 600s, commenting that Robe has really got the colour range "Spot on!", particularly the pinks, turquoises, magentas, lavenders, etc., that are traditionally difficult areas of the spectrum for LED fixtures to reproduce. He adds that the white is "A real, proper white" again, something that many LED fixtures struggle with.

He's also very satisfied with the smooth dimmer curve.

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In addition to the 40 LEDWash 600s, he's using 22 Robe ColorWash 2500s, 16 on the side trusses and 6 on a mini truss at the front, 50 ft above the stage. Then there are 30 Robe ColorBeam 700E ATs, 20 scattered about the over-stage trusses and 10 on the floor lining the onstage walkway, which are used for amazing and very bright back lighting and beam effects. The Robe count is completed with 8 ROBIN 300 Beams on the downstage edge of the stage for fillers.



Once again these Robes were chosen for their brightness in a show that is a delicate balance between spectacular lighting and dynamic, strong screen imagery on a large and intense surface that runs throughout the entire show.

He's operating the lightshow from a WholeHog III console.

The current JLS UK arena tour runs till the end of January 2011, making it one of the longest and most successful of the year.